

WHITE MOUNTAIN APACHE TRIBE



Elected Officials



Chairman: Ronnie Lupe

Environmental Director: Brenda Begay

Land Base: 1,600,000 acres

The Reservation is larger than the state of Delaware.

Primary Economy: Gaming, tourism, resort

Population and Poverty (2010 Census):

12,429 residents live on the reservation; 47% live in poverty

Educational Attainment (of persons over 25)

63.1% have at least a high school diploma; 7.1% have a bachelor's or graduate degree

EPA Funding (2014-2015)

GAP	\$158,000
128(a) STBRG	\$80,000
CWA 106	\$150,000
CWA 319	\$50,000
CAA 106	\$75,000
Hazardous Waste	\$73,250
Total	\$586,250

Water Rights Quantification Agreement

Federal approval of the White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Rights Quantification Agreement was signed by the DOI in July 2013. The legislation includes substantial benefits for the Tribe, including funding of more than \$200 million for the planning, design, construction, and operation and maintenance of the WMAT Rural Water System and an additional authorization for \$78.5 million for a Settlement Fund for fish production, rehabilitation of recreational lakes, and other projects that will benefit of the Tribe. (See attachment). Kate Rao (7-3549)



Wastewater Enforcement

On December 19, 2014, EPA and the Tribe entered into Administrative Orders on Consent (AOCs) for five wastewater treatment plants. The AOCs require the Tribe, White Mountain Apache Tribal Utility Authority and Sunrise Ski Resort to take specific steps to bring the facilities into compliance with their permits. Currently, the Tribe has submitted all deliverables for the first quarter. They are developing project engineering reports and operation and maintenance manuals for their wastewater systems. (See attachment). Adam Howell (7-4248)

Air Grant

The objective of this project is to help build the tribe's capacity to assess air quality conditions and to develop strategies to address air quality issues. The Tribe will continue strategic planning and evaluation, compliance assistance, developing implementation plans, monitoring air emissions, rulemaking, operating permits, and other program activities. Roy Ford (2-3997)

General Environmental Information

The Tribe continues to expand its environmental protection efforts in different capacity areas within the GAP. Recent successes include the tribal leadership representation for the RTOC, coordination with local schools and tribes to sponsor a Tribal Earth Week event, and an e-waste event in partnership with the ADEQ. The most significant accomplishment was the Tribe's video production entitled "Respect our Land" in which the Tribe utilized different age demographics within its community to showcase the impacts of poor solid waste management and how those situations may be corrected by increasing education on recycling and reuse and making small behavioral steps toward more sustainable practices on the reservation. The video was showcased at RTOC in 2014 and has since been requested by other tribes in Region 9. Erskine Benjamin II (2-3561)

Environmental Impact Statement Underway for Tribe's New Drinking Water System

An environmental impact statement (EIS) is now being prepared to assess the potential environmental effects of constructing the White Mountain Apache Rural Water System to divert, store, and distribute water from the North Fork of the White River for the use and benefit of the White Mountain Apache Tribe. The Proposed Action would include construction and operation of the Tribe's Rural Water System, which includes a dam, storage reservoir, pumping plant, treatment facilities, and a distribution system that would provide water to communities located on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation, Arizona, including Whiteriver, Fort Apache, Canyon Day, Cedar Creek, Carrizo, and Cibecue. The Proposed Action is the outcome of the Tribe's Water Rights Quantification Act of 2010 (Act) in which Congress directed the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) to plan, design, and construct the Tribe's Rural Water System. The Act also provides for operation of the completed system by BOR for three years following construction, after which the Tribe would own, operate and maintain the water system. BOR is the lead federal agency for the NEPA analysis, with the Tribe and BIA as cooperating agencies. EPA sent scoping comments on the project to the BOR in November 2013. Karen Vitulano (7-4178)

Proposed Project: Resolution Mine

The Apache Tribes have opposed this proposed mine project, located 65 miles southeast of Phoenix, due to impacts to sacred sites. The National Defense Authorization Act included a land swap, giving Resolution Copper Inc. 2,400 acres of copper-containing land in the Tonto National Forest in exchange for 5,300 acres of land scattered throughout southeast Arizona. A petition was led by the San Carlos Apache chairman, but the project is likely to be of interest to all Apache tribes. The Association of American Indian Affairs has strongly opposed the project, warning in 2012 that the proposal would destroy the area's religious and cultural integrity. In early December 2014, the Society for American Archeology stated its opposition to congressional leaders. Interior Secretary Sally Jewell also expressed dismay over the land swap, noting "[I]t removes a requirement to consult with the tribe and give them any ability to influence the outcome. And I think that is profoundly disappointing". Jewell noted that the federal government now needs to "use all the tools in our toolbox to make sure that [local stakeholders'] voice is heard and that it influences the future course of that project". In addition to sacred sites, it would impact a scenic recreation area, which was protected prior to the land exchange, and there are concerns regarding the potential use of the mining technique called block cave mining, which could create a large (1000+ acre) subsidence crater. The NEPA process has not yet begun. Karen Vitulano (7-4178)

Household Hazardous Waste Funds

The Tribe will set up a household hazardous waste (HHW) collection program to properly dispose of and recycle HHW. HHW rules and regulations will be developed and integrated into the Tribe's existing code; public outreach will be conducted; used oil collection facilities will be established; staff trainings and HHW and E-waste collections events will be conducted. Michelle Baker (2-3206)

Brownfields Cleanup of Contaminated Site

White Mountain Apache has a 128(a) State and Tribal Brownfield and Response grant for \$80,000 this year and have been receiving the grant since FY2013. They are using the grant to develop a Brownfields Inventory, create and update a Response Program, and establish and maintain a public record. They will also be conducting site assessment on properties throughout the reservation, which will be prioritized using public input.

Additionally, they have received a Brownfields Cleanup grant to address contamination at the Former McNary Lumber Mill. Their current grant has nearly expired and they are in the process of applying for an additional grant. The mill was closed in 1980 and is contaminated with PCBs, petroleum hydrocarbons, arsenic, and asbestos-containing materials. The cleanup will not only help to conserve two acres of wetlands at the site, but will also eventually be redeveloped into open/green space for the community. Sharron Murray (7-4250)